Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program: Criminology and Criminal Justice	Department: School of Social Work
Degree or Certificate Level: Master of Arts in Criminology & Criminal Justice (MACCJ)	College/School: College for Public Health and Social Justice
Date (Month/Year): August 30, 2021	Primary Assessment Contact: Joseph Schafer

In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? AY 2020-2021

In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? AY 2017-2018

1. Student Learning Outcomes

Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

We identified three SLOs for the MACCJ program that were assessed during this annual assessment cycle (SLOs #1, #2, and #3).

1) Students will assess relevant criminology and criminal justice (CCJ) literature/scholarly contributions.
2) Students will apply CCJ theories, practices, policies, or research methodologies.
3) Students will apply knowledge from CCJ to address problems in broader contexts.

We attempted to assess students' perceptions of learning across three MACCJ learning outcomes (LOs 1-3) through self-report via our MACCJ Exit Survey in May 2021. The program had only one student graduate during the academic year and that student did not complete the exit survey.

2. Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning

Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved this outcome? Please identify the course(s) in which these artifacts were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

Individual student data was collected from one CCJ course: CCJ 5000 (Criminological Theory). This course was offered during fall 2020. No other course tied to our approved program assessment plan were offered during this academic year. We also attempted to gather data from students graduating the MACCJ degree program.

No online, off-campus, or Madrid student artifacts were included in our assessment activities.

3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process

What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and include them in/with this report.

Individual student data was collected from our foundational theory course CCJ 5000 (Criminological Theory). The terminal writing assignments this course was used as the basis for the assessment data provided by Dr. Vaughn (CCJ5000), who evaluated each student's submission using the approved rubrics indicated in our current assessment plan.

Rubrics are included with this report.

4. Data/Results

What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcomes? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

The MACCJ Program Director reviewed the rubric scores submitted for CCJ5000. The summary findings and a draft copy of this report were presented to the MACCJ committee for discussion regarding how to improve student performance for these specific learning objectives.

Core courses in the MACCJ program are normally only offered as face to face, on-ground STL courses. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CCJ5000 was offered as an online, synchronous course during Fall 2020.

SLO #1 Students will assess relevant criminology and criminal justice (CCJ) literature/scholarly contributions.

Direct Measures

- None of the four MACCJ students enrolled in CCJ5000 during fall 2020 were assessed to have performed at the "graduate level" on their final course paper in terms of assessing relevant CCJ literature/scholarly contributions.
- All four students (100%) performed at level three (two levels above the benchmark) on assessing literature in CCJ5000.

SLO #2 Students will apply CCJ theories, practices, policies, or research methodologies.

Direct Measures

- None of the four MACCJ students enrolled in CCJ5000 during fall 2020 were assessed to have performed at the "graduate level" on their final course paper in terms of applying research methodologies. It should be noted that none of these students had yet taken our graduate-level research methodology course (CCJ5200).
- All four students (100%) performed at level three (two levels above the benchmark) in applying CCJ research methodologies.

SLO #3 Students will apply knowledge from CCJ to address problems in broader contexts.

Direct Measures

- None of the four MACCJ students enrolled in CCJ5000 during fall 2020 were assessed to have performed at the "graduate level" on their final course paper in terms of applying knowledge from CCJ to address problems in broader context.
- All four students (100%) performed at level three (two levels above the benchmark) in applying CCJ research methodologies.

Overall Results from MACCJ Exit Survey

Indirect Measures (self-reported)

Only one student graduated from the MACCJ program during this academic year. That student did not complete the self-assessment included in the MACCJ Exit Survey.

5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

The data indicate we need to continue to expose our students to criminal justice and criminology theories, practices, policies, and research methodologies. Graduate courses need to continue to provide students with the skills to understand how to address crime and justice problems in broader contexts. While the results of this academic year's assessment are lower than we would like to see, it bears noting the four assessed students were all first semester MACCJ students learning online during a global pandemic. Though none were rated as demonstrating graduate level proficiency, all were assessed above the benchmark for their proficiency. We continue to explore new ways to improve our course offering and pedagogy to create a dynamic and meaningful learning experience for our students.

6. Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of Current Assessment Findings

A. When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

Our CCJ faculty meet monthly during the regular academic year to discuss issues and make oversight decisions regarding the BA and MA degree programs. As part of our ongoing assessment work we have added "assessment tasks" as a standing item on our monthly meeting agenda to ensure routine and timely discussion of program assessment tasks and findings. All MACCJ Program areas are appropriate foci for our assessment activities and we make a concerted ongoing effort to discuss assessment, including our plan, its implementation, and the tools (e.g., assignments, rubrics, etc.) used to engage in this important endeavor. This report was reviewed and discussed by the CCJ faculty. A discussion regarding recommendations for change/revision in any program area (or in our assessment activities), took place. The faculty determined the findings contained in this report are largely favorable indicators that learning experiences in graduate courses align with student learning outcomes on direct and indirect measures.

B. How specifically have you decided to use findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you've initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies	• Course content • Teaching techniques • Improvements in technology • Prerequisites	• Course sequence • New courses • Deletion of courses • Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings
Changes to the Assessment Plan	• Student learning outcomes • Student artifacts collected • Evaluation process	• Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics) • Data collection methods • Frequency of data collection

Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of the findings.

Faculty will continue to explore and discuss ways to improve some of the performance indicators in CCJ5000 (Criminological Theory). The results of this assessment, while not poor, demonstrate that changes in assigned readings or course approaches might be needed to enhance student performance regarding these LOs.

If no changes are being made, please explain why.

7. Closing the Loop: Review of Previous Assessment Findings and Changes

A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

The MACCJ program assessment plan is being revised for resubmission in the coming academic year. We have introduced a new required course that will necessitate future changes to our learning outcomes and indicators.

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

Once the learning objectives are re-evaluated, the committee will determine whether a comprehensive measure might be used to assessed graduating MACCJ students. This would require determining the timing and the methodology for administering that measure. The exit survey has not been reviewed in several years, so we will also discuss whether changes are needed to that instrument, as well.

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

The program was able to identify the specific needs of the students and the program and implement programmatic and curricular changes to address areas of growth.

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

We will continue to utilize the results of our assessment to inform our curricula and program offerings. The assessment has also helped the program to identify faculty needs for future hires.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools and/or revised/updated assessment plans along with this report.

MACCJ Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Rubrics

MACCJ Rubric 1 (Effective Messaging)

Graduate (4)	Milestones (3)	Milestones (2)	Benchmark (1)
Demonstrates a masterful understanding of context, audience and purpose. Uses quality, relevant and compelling content, including rigorous, credible sources to illustrate mastery of the subject. Uses graceful and concise language that conveys meaning to the reader/viewer/listener.	Demonstrates a highly competent understanding of context, audience and purpose. Uses appropriate, relevant and compelling content, including the use of quality, credible sources to illustrate in-depth understanding of the subject. Uses graceful and concise language that conveys meaning to the reader/viewer/listener.	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience and purpose. Uses appropriate and relevant content and credible sources to illustrate a proficient understanding of the subject. Demonstrates the use of fluent and concise language that conveys meaning to the reader/viewer/listener.	Demonstrates consideration of context, audience and purpose. Uses appropriate, relevant and compelling content to explore ideas. Consistently uses relevant sources to support ideas and uses clear and concise language that conveys meaning to the reader/viewer/listener.

MACCJ Rubric 2 (Conducting/Evaluating CCJ Research)

Graduate (4)	Milestones (3)	Milestones (2)	Benchmark (1)
Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between research paradigm and methodological choices. Makes sophisticated decisions about methods of inquiry that expertly address a particular research purpose/question/hypothesis. Demonstrates an expert understanding of the appropriate criteria for evaluating CCJ research. Provides a sophisticated explanation of ethics associated with research practice.	Demonstrates a skillful understanding of the relationship between research paradigm and methodological choices. Makes knowledgeable decisions about methods of inquiry that skillfully address a particular research purpose/question/hypothesis. Demonstrates a knowledgeable understanding of the appropriate criteria for evaluating CCJ research. Provides a knowledgeable explanation of ethics associated with research practice.	Demonstrates a more than basic understanding of the relationship between research paradigm and methodological choices. Makes decisions about methods of inquiry that address a particular research purpose/question/hypothesis, with some skill. Demonstrates a more than basic understanding of the appropriate criteria for evaluating CCJ research. Provides a more than basic explanation of ethics associated with research practice.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of the relationship between research paradigm and methodological choices. Makes decisions about methods of inquiry that address a particular research purpose/question/hypothesis. Demonstrates a basic understanding of the appropriate criteria for evaluating CCJ research. Provides a basic explanation of ethics associated with research practice.

MACCJ Rubric 3 (Applying CCJ Theories to Address Problems in Broader Context)

Graduate (4)	Milestones (3)	Milestones (2)	Benchmark (1)
Gives a sophisticated summarization of a theory that displays a nuanced understanding of the concepts and assumptions of the theory and its connection to research in the field. Applies a theory to broader contexts in unique ways that yield new knowledge and contributions. Shows expert understanding of a theory's implications and limitations and possibilities for expanding or enriching the field.	Gives a thoughtful summarization of a theory that displays an understanding of the concepts and assumptions of the theory and its connection to research in the field. Recognizes implications of theory in a way that articulates possibilities for differing contexts and applications of the theory.	Gives an adequate summarization of a theory that displays a basic understanding of the concepts and assumptions of the theory and its connection to research in the field. Chooses appropriate, relevant examples to demonstrate a theory's applicability and explains the relationship between theory and examples, with more analysis.	Gives a summarization of a theory with some understanding of how it relates to research in the field. Locates and explains relationships between theory and relevant examples.